

# Rapist brought to justice after 11 years on the run

**Rustenburg** – A rapist who told an investigating officer that “a bad spirit and the devil” made him rape an 18-month old baby eleven years ago, was sentenced to life at the North West High Court in Mogwase on 28 March. The 38-year old rapist was arrested in the

Eastern Cape after being on the run since the abduction and rape of the baby in Phokeng in August 2007. The crime sent shock waves through the community of Phokeng. The 21-year old mother left her baby for barely 15 minutes at home as she visited a tuck shop. At the time, the mother who is a Lesotho citizen, was renting a room in Meriting. On her return, she discovered that the baby had disappeared. Another tenant, who also rented a room on the same premises, Elliot, a Xhosa speaking male, was home at the time of the disappearance of the child. Strangely enough he was nowhere to be found ever since the baby girl went missing. The search for the child continued until a dog was

seen running with a blood-stained nappy. The dog was followed, and the baby girl was heard crying in the veld between Impala mines and Meriting. The child was dehydrated and seriously injured from being raped. SAPS members were summoned, and the child was taken for medical attention. Fortunately, the baby lived through the ordeal. The distraught mother was sent for counselling. SAPS members in Rustenburg traced the suspect to his place of employment at Impala mines. He was arrested and detained on 27 August 2007. He appeared in court and was granted bail. The accused fled to the Eastern Cape and a warrant for his arrest was issued. The accused was traced six years later and arrested in King Williamstown on a similar rape case. He appeared in court, but the case was unfortunately withdrawn, and the suspect released. A circulation of the accused was done in 2015. The SAPS traced him in King Williamstown on 6 October 2016.

He was then finally transported to Phokeng and detained. He appeared in the Tlhabane Court the next day and was refused bail. The case was remanded until he was sentenced on 28 March 2018. The mother of the child, who had since returned to Lesotho, was brought to Phokeng for the trial. The accused, who was 27-years old at the time when the crime was committed, was sentenced to life imprisonment. “His name will be listed in the register for sexual offences and he is declared unfit to ever possess a firearm,” said captain Elsabé Augustides, police spokesperson.

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